

and that the *feuilleton* will not begin to appear until the early days of June. As you would like to have a few chapters in advance, however, I think I may be able to send the first ones about the end of next month. . . . I wish you good health, good work, and am very cordially yours,

"SIMILE  
ZOLA."

Again there came delays, perhaps, because for the purposes of his book Zola was following the campaign against the religious orders.<sup>1</sup> At all events the proofs of the first four chapters were not sent to Messrs. Chatto till July 10, on which date the novelist wrote to Vizetelly that the serial issue would begin in "L'Aurore" on September 10. About this time, July, Zola had completed the actual writing of the work, and revised the proofs of Book I, the first forty pages of which were as good as anything he had ever penned. But as the work proceeded its hybrid character became manifest. As the Affaire Flamidien had suggested itself to Zola's mind it would have been better if the criminal part of the work had been confined to it. The grafting of the Dreyfus case upon another one led to various difficulties in the narrative, and the very restraint which Zola imposed upon himself in his veiled account of the real Affair was prejudicial to the general effect. In the writer's opinion the best part of the work was that describing the con-

<sup>1</sup> In the early parts of this year, 1902, Messrs. Eaoul do

Saint-Arroman.  
and Charles Hugot produced a dramatic version of "La  
Terre" which attracted considerable attention. Some scenes were certainly  
interesting, but the play was deficient in cohesion. The same authors had  
previously adapted "Au Bonheur des Dames" for the stage. Subsequent to Zola's  
death M. de Saint-Arroman related in "Le Sie'cle" that on "being asked  
what percentage of the author's rights in those plays should he paid to him  
the novelist had answered, "Whatever you like." Zola's enemies often  
insinuated that his nature was a grasping one in money as in other matters, hut  
there was no truth whatever in the charge.